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December 16, 2008

## AGENDA ITEM 4a

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS COMMITTEE**

- I. SUBJECT:** Strategic Health Communications – Quarterly Update
- II. PROGRAM:** Office of Public Affairs, Health Benefits Branch
- III. RECOMMENDATION:** Information Only
- IV. BACKGROUND:**

At the April 2008 Health Benefits Committee (HBC) meeting, the Office of Public Affairs (PAOF) and Health Benefits Branch (HBB) presented to the Committee a program of education and awareness linked to our annual rate negotiation activities and to the mid- and long-term strategic goals for the Health Program.

The planning framework for this program involved communicating information in a phased approach to our various constituent groups (including members, employers, and labor organizations) about strategic health issues, objectives, and decisions.

We are currently in the “post-decision/Open Enrollment” phase, which runs from July through December. Following are our recent activities during this phase, proposed activities, and additional communication initiatives.

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

#### Health Open Enrollment

We worked closely with HBB staff this year to develop Open Enrollment marketing materials that not only provided information about 2009 health program benefits and rates, but educated members and employers about our commitment to providing high quality benefits at an affordable price.

- Included article in ***Open Enrollment News*** on health care cost drivers, gave tips on how members can help keep costs down, and highlighted Board's efforts to contain costs and improve health outcomes for members
- Developed new ***CalPERS Medicare Enrollment Guide*** to help members understand how Medicare works with their CalPERS health benefits

- Updated the ***Prescription for Quality Health Care*** to educate members on the key differences between a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) and Preferred Provider Organization (PPO), the benefits of using generic drugs, the convenience of using mail order for maintenance medications, and when to use an urgent care facility instead of the emergency room
- Provided Open Enrollment marketing materials and publications to the Capitol Weekly for its four-part feature series on Health Open Enrollment

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES**

### **Education Campaign**

At the September 2008 HBC meeting, Dr. Kathy Donneson, Assistant Chief of the Office of Health Policy & Program Support, made a presentation on a new Health Benefits Program Report based on member claims data from CalPERS Health Care Decision Support System (HCDSS). This initial report provided the Committee with a standard set of Health Benefits Program measures related to enrollment, premiums, utilization, and cost.

The Office of Public Affairs is proposing to collaborate with HBB to develop a 12-month campaign to increase awareness and educate employees, employers, labor groups, and other constituents about CalPERS health care trends and costs.

Staff will base the key elements of this campaign on HCDSS data contained in current and future Health Benefits Program Reports. We will identify and prioritize key topics and data, highlighting their impact on rate negotiations with our health plans and the resulting premiums our members pay. The proposed topics for this campaign include:

- Anatomy of Your Health Premium
- Routine screening exams
- Generic vs. brand name drugs
- Mail order for maintenance medications
- Back, bone, and joint care
- Aging, weight gain, and other changes – how these relate to the development of specific diseases, such as high blood pressure and diabetes
- Emergency room usage

HBB staff has secured the data for these topics from the HCDSS. They are currently analyzing the data and identifying for our members the associated “call to action” related to each. Once we have this information, we will develop a central theme and education materials for the campaign.

Communication avenues for the campaign would include:

- PERSpective newsletters – first article appearing in Winter edition (January 2009)
- InCalPERS newsletters (starting in January 2009)
- Labor group and other member association newsletters
- Employer News articles
- Fact Sheets for distribution to interested stakeholder groups
- Marketing materials distributed during Retirement Planning Fairs
- Speech materials for Board and Executive Management use
- Special Web pages (for member and employer) on CalPERS On-Line
- Advertisements in my|CalPERS

### **ADDITIONAL COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES**

As part of our ongoing commitment to wellness and disease management, we embarked on a new Smoking Cessation initiative and ramped-up marketing efforts for the *Health Plan Chooser* tool.

#### **Smoking Cessation**

Brad Pacheco, Assistant Division Chief of Public Affairs, represented CalPERS at the Commonwealth Club's Tobacco Summit in June 2008. To add to this, we:

- Developed a targeted section on CalPERS On-Line to educate members on the smoking cessation benefits and programs available from each of our health plans
- Featured an article in the fall issue of PERSpective
- Promoted the initiative via eNews
- Created a one-page flyer to be disseminated at Retirement Planning Fairs and CalPERS Educational Forum (sample attached)
- Created a poster for employers to post at the worksite
- Developed a segment on smoking cessation for the upcoming CalPERS Member Network video
- Worked with the Department of Personnel Administration to deliver the information through their networks of human resource representatives

#### **Health Plan Chooser**

CalPERS partners with the Pacific Business Group on Health (PBGH) to provide an online tool – the *Health Plan Chooser* – to help our members evaluate their health plan options and make an educated decision during Open Enrollment and throughout the year. PBGH made some additional enhancements to the Chooser this year to make it more user-friendly and effective. To promote this valuable tool to members and employers, we:

- Developed an article for InCalPERS
- Marketed the Chooser in eNews
- Expanded the Chooser section in the public agency marketing award-winning brochure, ***What matters?***
- Wrote an article for Employer News

- Developed and disseminated a press release to labor group newsletter editors
- Distributed *Health Plan Chooser* brochures to members at Open Enrollment health fairs, and to employers at the CalPERS Education Forum
- Included targeted information in Open Enrollment publications, including ***Open Enrollment News, 2009 Health Benefit Summary*** and ***2009 Prescription for Quality Health Care***
- Considering a segment in an upcoming CalPERS Member Network video to demonstrate the benefits of using the Chooser

**V. STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This item supports CalPERS Strategic Plan Goal I0 – “Develop and administer quality, sustainable health benefit programs that are responsive to, and valued by, enrollees and employers” and Strategic Plan Goal 11 – “Promote the ability of members and employers to make informed decisions resulting in improved lifestyle choices and improved health outcomes.”

**VI. RESULTS/COSTS:**

The CalPERS costs associated with this item are included in the annual budget of the HBB.

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